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*The Beginners of a Nation ; A History of the Source and Rise of the earliest English Settlements in America, with special Reference to the Life and Character of the People.* By EDWARD EGGLESTON. (New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1896. Pp. 377.)

As this is the first volume of an extended work, any judgment passed upon it must be to a degree provisional. The plan of the author is not fully revealed; the position which this volume is to occupy in the completed series cannot yet be accurately known. Still in his preface Mr. Eggleston has taken the reader to an extent into his confidence. From what is there stated one would infer that it is his purpose to write what Guizot, for example, would have called a history of civilization in the Anglo-American colonies. By taking account of the social and political forces operating then and there, he hopes to reveal the character of the age, the traits of the colonists, and the motives which led to colonization. Conversely, by a study of the colonists themselves, both individually and collectively, he will aim to show what was the nature of the forces to which they were subject. And yet it is far from the intention of the author to make his treatment of the period impersonal or in any sense abstract. He intends that it shall be a study of life as it actually existed, and that life shall be made to reveal itself through abundant examples.

The volume before us is devoted to the colonizing enterprises of the English on the American continent prior to the middle of the seventeenth century. After describing the notions—most of them false—which were at that time held concerning the New World, the author shows how Virginia, Maryland and the Puritan colonies of New England were founded. The whole, exclusive of notes, is compressed within less than 300 pages. The intention rigidly to exclude from view all that was not permanent and controlling is indicated by the fact that the work of Gorges, Mason and the New England Council is ignored. The material gathered during the years of patient research has been carefully sifted, and that which has been selected as germane to the purpose is presented to the reader in a style of such beauty and force as to make the book at once a history and a contribution to literature. The geniality of the author appears on every page. He shows little love for events or facts as such, but an affection for representative men which leads him to give what some might think a disproportionate amount of space to the analysis of their characters. But to these characterizations, at once just and brilliant, much of the attractiveness of the book is due. As they proceed from a critical study of the sources, and as the leaders at the outset largely gave direction to events, the writer seems justified in making prominent the biographical element in his narrative. This also seems to be in harmony with the general purpose of the work.

Upon the publication of a book which, like this, will be widely read, and deservedly so, the inquiry is forced upon the critic, what is the peculiar contribution here made to the literature of American history? If one looks for new facts, for positive additions to knowledge, few will be found.

Here and there from some obscure pamphlet or monograph, or from its hiding place in the volumes of some collection, a fact hitherto neglected or unknown has been brought forward and placed in its proper setting. But the field here covered has been too long cultivated and the gleaners within it have been too numerous to leave many facts undiscovered. In the later volumes of the work more positive contributions to knowledge in this form may be expected.

If one inquires whether a distinctly new point of view has been attained, resulting in a more satisfactory grouping of the facts than has been common, he will be compelled, on the whole, and so far as this volume goes, to give a negative answer. Other writers have accounted for the illusions concerning America under which Europeans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries labored, while the false views of colonization to which they contributed and the disastrous experiments resulting therefrom have been many times described. The intelligent reader will find himself on familiar ground when he follows Mr. Eggleston's account of the settlement of Virginia, of Separatism and Puritanism in England, and of the colonization of New England. The leading characters as they pass in review before him, John Smith, Bradford, Winthrop, Cotton, Roger Williams, Hooker, have in general the features with which he has long been acquainted. Sir Edwin Sandys is brought into deserved prominence, and his connection with the founding of more than one colony is shown. The colonization of Maryland is thrown into stronger relief than heretofore by showing at once the similarity and the contrast between its early development and that of the Puritan colonies of New England. But the reason why Maryland should be classed with Rhode Island and Connecticut as representing centrifugal tendencies in colonization is not quite apparent. Certainly it was not an offshoot of Virginia in anything like the sense in which the two colonies of southern New England were off-shoots of Massachusetts. The character of Calvert and his attitude toward toleration are treated with admirable judgment, but in discussing, from the legal standpoint, the possibility of establishing a Catholic colony in Maryland, Mr. Eggleston does not refer to the fact that the Elizabethan Act of Uniformity mentioned the dominions. So long as that was true the reference in the charter to rights enjoyed by the Bishop of Durham when England was Catholic would probably have proved worthless. In general, it seems to the reviewer that Mr. Eggleston in this volume has given to the public an able discussion in outline of the political and social history of the earliest Anglo-American achievements in colonization. It is neither purely political nor purely social history, but the two are so combined that the political element predominates. For this reason one is led to ask why most of the material in the chapter on the Procession of Motives was not reserved for a later installment of the work. The point of view, the method of treatment, the combination of political and social history in this volume, are such as to make it not essentially unlike the productions of the best of Mr. Eggleston's predecessors in the same field.

But the spirit in which the material of this book has been wrought out and presented is far superior to that usually attained. The author has put ancestor-worship, sectionalism and partisanship beneath his feet. His treatment of men and events is realistic. He has striven to know and to depict men as they were. He has not allowed later events to distort his vision of the beginning of things English on this continent. He says that he has not been able to treat the early settlers otherwise than unreverently, as men and women possessed alike of the faults and the excellencies of their age. This, of itself, is a great achievement. One has no difficulty in discovering that Mr. Eggleston admires the qualities of Sandys, of John Smith and Roger Williams, and that he dislikes the Earl of Warwick, Dale, Endicott and Cotton. The strictures upon some of these, and thus upon what they represent, are unusually severe; but at the same time the faults of his favorites are not concealed or slurred over. The highest test of the author's objectivity will come when events in which England was more directly concerned come into view, and when characters like Andros, Edmund Randolph and Hutchinson have to be discussed. It is believed that we have reached a time when a broad and impartial treatment of our early history is possible, and when such treatment in many quarters is actually in demand. The success with which Mr. Eggleston has met this demand constitutes, in the opinion of the reviewer, the highest merit of this installment of his work.

HERBERT L. OSGOOD.

*Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1677-1680*, preserved in the Public Record Office. Edited by the late W. NOEL SAINSBURY and the Hon. J. W. FORTESCUE. (London: H. M. Stationery Office. 1896. Pp. lvi, 700.)

This is the fifth volume in the series of *Calendars* relating to American colonial history, issued by the British government in recent years. It has an interest, apart from its intrinsic value, in being the last of the *Calendars* the preparation of which had the benefit of the long experience and special knowledge of the late W. Noel Sainsbury. The summary of the contents of the present volume is from the pen of the present editor of the series, Hon J. W. Fortescue.

The *Calendars* make no pretension to being anything more than full indices. As compared with the text of the original documents, they are meagre and unsatisfactory, especially so to students whose attention has been directed to the accumulation of facts relating to the economic condition of the people of the colonies. Such facts are to be found in documents of all kinds, but they are generally of a character to be passed over in preparing a mere synopsis.

In examining this bulky volume, a feeling of regret is aroused that the British government has not published the original documents in full, a vast and costly undertaking, it is true, but one which would have the hearty commendation of the descendants of the English people in all